

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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SERIAL NO: (International Serial No. PCT/EP2004/007921)

FILED: (International Filing Date: 15 July, 2004)

TITLE: AIRCRAFT

Preliminary Amendment: CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Currently Amended) Aircraft defining a cargo compartment and comprising
~~cargo compartment (2) with a cargo-compartment floor (3);~~
~~supporting elements (16), in particular floor beams supporting said to support a cargo-compartment floor (3) and to be connected to a body or a skin (1) of the aircraft;~~
at least one functional units (56, 58, 59), in particular water tanks, waste water tanks, EE racks or similar electronic components; and
~~characterized in that the functional units (56, 58, 59) comprise a pallets (70) or similar supporting structures to transport the said functional units, (56, 58, 59) said pallet being adapted for the transportation of said functional unit into said the cargo compartment and (2), said pallets (70) being provided with a fixation means that provides devices (71) to create a stable connection to said the cargo-compartment floor (3).~~

2. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to Claim 1, wherein at least one of ~~characterized in that~~ the pallets ~~(70)~~ and/or the cargo-compartment floor ~~(3)~~ comprise connecting devices ~~(61, 72)~~ adapted to join a connection leads ~~(73)~~ or similar functional devices of the

functional units ~~(56, 58, 59)~~ to a corresponding connection leads ~~(26, 27)~~ of the aircraft.

3. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to Claim 1, wherein said one of the preceding claims, characterized ~~in that the~~ cargo compartment comprises (2) ~~is equipped with~~ guide means adapted ~~devices (74)~~ to guide said the functional units as ~~they are~~ it is being transported within the cargo compartment ~~(2)~~.
4. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to ~~one of the preceding claims, in particular according to~~ Claim 3, wherein ~~characterized in that the~~ said guide means devices (74) comprises guide rails located along at least one of side walls and/or along a ceiling defining said of the cargo compartment.
5. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to Claim 1, wherein at least one of the preceding claims, characterized ~~in that at least~~ sections of a partitions (54) ~~can be or are~~ is mounted on said the pallets ~~(70)~~.
6. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to Claim 5, wherein said one of the preceding claims, characterized ~~in that the~~ functional units ~~(56, 58, 59)~~ ~~can be or are~~ is mounted on said at least one sections of a partitions (54).
7. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to ~~one of the preceding claims, in particular one of the Claims 5, wherein said or 6,~~ characterized ~~in that the~~ partitions ~~(54)~~ comprises sealing means whereby it is devices (64) ~~to sealed them to the~~ parts of the aircraft defining said cargo compartment ~~(2)~~.

8. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to Claim 1, ~~wherein said one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the cargo-compartment floor (3) comprises floor elements (51, 51') that are connected to the supporting beams elements (16) to form prefabricated floor modules (50, 50').~~

9. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to ~~one of the preceding claims, in particular according to Claim 8,~~ wherein characterized in that sections of conducting devices comprising at least one of cable channels (23), hydraulic conduits (25), water conduits (26), electrical leads (27) or similar and other conducting devices are provided in the floor modules (50) in such a way that those in one floor module connect with others together with conducting devices of the same kind in adjacent floor modules (50') they to form overall conducting systems on installation when the floor modules (50, 50') are installed in the aircraft.

10. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to ~~one of the preceding claims, in particular according to Claim 9,~~ wherein at least one of said characterized in that the conducting devices (23, 25-27) comprises a branches (28) adapted for connection to a prespecified places on at least one of said the floor elements (51) and/or the said functional units (56, 58, 59).

11. (Currently Amended) Aircraft ~~Cargo-compartment floor~~ according to ~~one of the preceding claims, in particular according to one of the Claims 8,~~ wherein said cargo-compartment floor comprises a plurality of prefabricated floor modules and wherein a plurality of -10, characterized in that assembly elements (30) are provided to connect each of said on the floor modules (50) or floor elements (51) for mechanically stable connection to

adjacent floor modules ~~(50')~~ or floor elements ~~(51')~~ during or after installation in the aircraft.

12. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to ~~one of the preceding claims, in particular according to one of the Claims 8, wherein said 11, characterized in that the~~ floor elements ~~(51)~~ comprise sealing devices adapted to ~~(40)~~ for sealing off a space defined above said the floor elements ~~(51)~~ from a space defined below them.
13. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to ~~one of the preceding claims, in particular according to one of the Claims 8, wherein 12, characterized in that~~ leakproof connecting elements ~~(43, 44)~~ are provided and form to ~~create~~ a leakproof connection between each of said the floor elements ~~(51)~~ and at least one of adjacent floor elements ~~(51')~~ and ~~or~~ the skin ~~(1)~~ of the aircraft.
14. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to ~~one of the preceding claims, in particular according to one of the Claims 8, wherein 13, characterized in that~~ drainage devices ~~(46)~~ are provided to carry a liquids out of the cargo compartment ~~(2)~~ and to transfer said the liquid into a corresponding drainage devices of an adjacent floor modules ~~(50')~~.
15. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to ~~one of the preceding claims, in particular according to one of the Claims 8, wherein said 14, characterized in that the~~ floor modules ~~(50)~~ comprise insulating devices adapted ~~(53)~~ to insulate a lower portion ~~half~~ ~~(6)~~ of a the fuselage of the aircraft.
16. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to ~~one of the preceding claims, in particular according to~~ Claim 15, wherein said ~~characterized in that the~~ insulating devices

~~(53)~~ are attached at at least one of below said the floor elements (51) and/or in the region of the supporting beams elements (16) near to said the skin (1) of the aircraft.

17. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to ~~one of the preceding claims, in particular according to one of the Claims 8, wherein said -16, characterized in that the floor modules (50) comprise at least one of a bulkheads or similar partitions (54) and a or fixation devices (55) for a the fixation of partitions (54).~~
18. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to ~~one of the preceding claims, in particular according to one of the Claims 8, wherein said -17, characterized in that the floor modules (50) comprise at least one of wall linings and/or ceiling linings or similar a lining elements (62) and a or mounting devices (63) for said elements, in order to line the cargo compartment (2).~~
19. (Currently Amended) Method of manufacturing an aircraft comprising the steps of
 - building a cargo compartment (2) with a cargo-compartment floor (3);
 - providing supporting elements ~~(16), in particular floor beams to supporting said a cargo-compartment floor (3) and to be connected to a body or a skin (1) of the aircraft;~~
 - providing at least one functional units ~~(56, 58, 59), in particular water tanks, waste water tanks, EE racks or similar electronic components;~~
 - ~~characterized in that~~
 - providing at least one pallet;
 - mounting said the functional units are mounted outside the aircraft on said pallets or similar supporting structures, outside the aircraft;

loading said ~~the—mounted~~ functional units mounted on said pallet ~~are loaded~~ into the aircraft; ~~and~~ transporting said functional unit mounted on said pallet over said ~~on—the~~ cargo-compartment floor ~~are transported to~~ a destination in the cargo compartment; and

fixing said ~~the—mounted~~ functional units mounted on said pallet ~~are fixed~~ to the cargo-compartment floor at the destination site.

20. (Currently Amended) Method according to Claim 19, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ at least sections of partitions are mounted on at least one of the pallets and ~~or on~~ the functional units while they are outside the aircraft prior to installation therein.
21. (New) A pre-fabricated floor module for an aircraft comprising a floor element, supporting beams connected to said floor element and adapted for connection to a skin of an aircraft to form at least part of a floor of a cargo-compartment of said aircraft, and a plurality of assembly elements connected to said floor element and adapted to connect said floor module to adjacent similar floor modules during or after installation in the aircraft.
22. (New) A floor module according to Claim 21, comprising sections of conducting devices being at least one of a cable channel, an hydraulic conduit, a water conduit, an electrical lead and other conducting device that are located in the floor module in such a way that each will connect with another of the same kind in an adjacent floor module to form an overall conducting systems on installation of all said modules in the aircraft.

23. (New) A floor module according to Claim 22, wherein at least one of said conducting devices comprises a branch adapted for connection to a prespecified place on said floor element.